

APPENDIX B

NATIONAL REGISTRATION FORM

PREPARED BY HESS, ROISE, AND COMPANY

JUNE 2013

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Peavey Plaza

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1101 Nicollet Mall

| |
|-----|
| N/A |
|-----|

 not for publication

city or town Minneapolis

| |
|-----|
| N/A |
|-----|

 vicinity

state Minnesota code MN county Hennepin code 053 zip code 55403

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

X national statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title Barbara Mitchell Howard, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | private |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 0 | 0 | buildings |
| 1 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 1 | 0 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LANDSCAPE / plaza

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LANDSCAPE / plaza

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: CONCRETE

roof: N/A

other: EARTH

OTHER

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Peavey Plaza is located at 1101 Nicollet Mall and occupies one acre on the block bounded by Nicollet Mall to the west, Marquette Avenue to the east, and Eleventh and Twelfth Streets to the north and south, respectively.¹ Orchestra Hall is situated east of the plaza and occupies the rest of the block. The plaza is a significant example of a M. Paul Friedberg-designed urban park plaza in the Modernist style. As such, it consists of a variety of well-organized, rectilinear, interconnected spaces that are oriented to the street grid.

Narrative Description²

The plaza has landscaped terraces set at multiple levels and organized around a 140-foot by 200-foot reflecting pool that is recessed 10 feet below street level. The pool was designed to be drained and used for cultural gatherings and performances. A large, stainless-steel and concrete fountain in the southwest corner at street level sends water cascading through rectilinear, multi-level basins to concrete rills around the perimeter of the reflecting pool. Water also flows from a smaller fountain on the west side of the plaza into the pool. Concrete steps provide seating and access to the pool, and the entire space is softened by sloped planting beds along the west, south, and east sides. An accessible ramp is located in the southeast corner. Large terraces with Honeylocust trees occupy upper and lower levels on the west side. The water features, as well as the landscaping elements like the steps, terraces, pavers and planters, are built with smooth and exposed-aggregate concrete.

Discrete entry points to the park are provided along the south and north sides of the plaza via the concrete steps. The north side has access to the street-level terrace, with concrete steps leading down to a lower terrace and reflecting pool. There are no specifically designed circulation patterns within the plaza. Instead, the site provides vantage points where people can sit and congregate. City sidewalks border the southwest, northwest, and northeast sides of the plaza.

A bosque of Honeylocust trees is planted at street level on the north end bordering Eleventh Street. To the west of this area, three flagpoles are supported by a concrete base that holds several bronze plaques. One, presented by the American Society of Landscape Architects in 1999 in honor of that organization's centennial, reads: "This site is recognized as a national landmark for outstanding landscape architecture."

Several custom-designed elements were detailed in the original plans and are still present at the site. Within the plaza, walls are rough-textured, board-formed concrete. Original freestanding wood benches, constructed of 12-inch by 12-inch timbers, and wall-mounted wood benches that utilize 4-inch by 4-inch timbers are located on all levels. Concrete bollards measuring 18 inches in height define the edges of the plaza. Poured concrete trash receptacles are found at key points within the plaza. Original light fixtures are also extant. One type consists of free-standing metal poles with clusters of clear, glass globes. The other type are cylindrical lights attached to circular metal frames that are mounted atop tall poles in the plaza.

Alterations

A section of landscaped plaza in the northeast corner abuts Orchestra Hall and was added after Peavey Plaza was completed. A restaurant was originally supposed to project out from the building into the plaza, but the restaurant space was never built. The orchestra abandoned the plan for the restaurant in 1977 and hired Friedberg in 1979 to design a complementary landscape to blend with the plaza. The construction was completed in 1980. Property that belongs to the orchestra is not included in this nomination because it was not part of the original design or construction period of the plaza.

¹ The downtown Minneapolis grid is on a northwest-southeast axis and the plaza is not oriented to the cardinal directions. To simplify the following description, the northeast side is assumed to be the north side, the southeast side is the east side, and so on.

² Parts of the description are taken from the following report: Minnesota Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, "Historic American Landscapes Survey—Peavey Park Plaza," HALS No. MN-2, September 2006.

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The plaza has experienced some alteration over time. New pre-cast concrete modular retaining walls were built adjacent to Twelfth Street in 1997. This city project replaced an existing sloped lawn and planting area adjacent to the accessible pedestrian ramp to the lower plaza. New planting areas incorporated into the walls received shrubs, such as forsythia and barberry, and hostas, none of which were included in the original Friedberg design. The next year the city added a similar wall and plantings adjacent to Nicollet Mall.

New poured-concrete walks were built on portions of the upper and lower plazas in 1998. The original square aggregate concrete pavers, which match the pavers found in much of the lower plaza, were replaced with gray concrete. Wood planting edging was added to contain mulch and prevent other materials from washing away. A number of the Honeylocust trees have died and been removed, and they have not been replaced. Some new acorn-fixture, light standards have been installed among the trees near Eleventh Avenue.

Integrity

The National Park Service provides guidance on evaluating the integrity of a historic designed landscape in National Register Bulletin 18 and on evaluating a historic property in National Register Bulletin 15. These bulletins advise that “the essential physical features” of a property must be identified. For a landscape, these can include, but are not limited to, “spatial relationships, vegetation, original property boundary, topography/grading, site-furnishings, design intent, architectural features, and circulation system.” The essential physical features of a property must be visible to convey its historic significance.³

Peavey Plaza meets this test. The plaza’s boundaries have remained constant since its construction and it continues to have integrity of location. The setting around the plaza has good integrity. Orchestra Hall and Westminster Presbyterian Church were extant when the plaza was constructed. The neighboring YWCA, 1200 on the Mall, and Loring Greenway were built during the same development period as the plaza. All of these properties continue to form a frame around the space. Some new buildings have been constructed since the 1970s, but these also contribute to the urban setting that surrounds the plaza.

The plaza has integrity of design and materials. Although some changes have occurred to planting beds and trees, the original grading and the concrete hardscape that exemplify M. Paul Friedberg’s original design are intact. The stainless-steel and concrete fountains, and site furnishings like light fixtures, trash receptacles, and bollards, continue to contribute to the plaza’s character. Many of the original Honeylocust trees survive, although some of the other plantings have been changed. Alterations to the structure of the planting beds and to some of the concrete pavers are reversible. Excellent workmanship is displayed in the concrete structure and finishes, particularly the board-formed concrete, which have withstood almost forty years of weathering with few repairs.

Peavey Plaza still retains the feeling of a Modern park plaza from the 1970s. The design, materials, workmanship, setting, and location make the plaza distinct in downtown Minneapolis. The feeling is so strong that it has inspired some critics to consider the plaza dated since it is from a currently unpopular period of landscape design. The plaza also maintains its integrity of association. It has the spatial layout and physical features that identify it as a landscape designed by M. Paul Friedberg. These features also emphasize its association with a period of urban renewal in downtown Minneapolis.

³ Quotes from *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1991), 61; J. Timothy Keller and Genevieve P. Keller, *National Register Bulletin 18: How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1994), 6.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☒ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1975

Significant Dates

1975

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

M. Paul Friedberg and Associates

Period of Significance (justification)

Peavey Plaza's period of significance is 1975, which is the year that it was completed—the culminating year of the city's efforts to bring an avant-garde plaza to the heart of Minneapolis.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Peavey Plaza's national significance in landscape architecture and its local significance in community development have been confirmed by substantial scholarly evaluation. As a result, the property is exceptionally important, thereby meeting the National Register's Criteria Consideration G.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Peavey Plaza, which opened in downtown Minneapolis in 1975, was the product of M. Paul Friedberg and Associates, one of the cutting-edge landscape architecture firms in the United States after World War II. Peavey Plaza helped establish Friedberg's reputation as a leader in the profession, which was undergoing a monumental change as designers rejected traditional picturesque ideals and embraced Modernism. The hard-edged urban landscapes they produced were radically different from anything that had come before.

The plaza is also noteworthy for its role in the revitalization of downtown Minneapolis, which narrowly escaped the decline that consumed many American cities in the post-war era. Conceived as part of an extension of the renowned Nicollet Mall by Lawrence Halprin and Associates, Peavey Plaza quickly became established as downtown's living room. The multilevel, multifunctional site hosted a variety of concerts and events, including some in conjunction with the adjacent Orchestra Hall. During non-programmed times, it became an urban oasis, with its large reflecting pool and bubbling fountains providing a welcome respite from the bustle of the city for downtown workers and visitors.

Peavey Plaza is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for its significance in the area of Landscape Architecture as a nationally important Modernist landscape by M. Paul Friedberg and Associates. Although some materials and elements have been altered, the property's design retains very good integrity overall. This is particularly noteworthy because many contemporary landscapes are no longer extant, including Friedberg's pioneering Jacob Riis Park in New York.

The property is also locally eligible under Criterion A in the area of Planning and Community Development. It was a major component of the city's renaissance in the 1960s and 1970s, along with the Guthrie Theater, Orchestra Hall, the Nicollet Mall, and the Loring Park Development District. The latter included the Loring Greenway, another work by Friedberg. Today, few of those properties retain integrity—or survive at all.

For both criteria, Peavey Plaza's period of significance is 1975, the year construction finished and the plaza opened to the public. While this period falls within the last fifty years, Peavey Plaza's national significance in landscape architecture and its local significance in community development have been confirmed by substantial scholarly evaluation. As a result, the property is exceptionally important, thereby meeting the National Register's Criteria Consideration G.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

A City on the Brink

To understand the significance of Peavey Plaza in downtown Minneapolis, it is helpful to know what led up to its creation and how it subsequently evolved.

Minneapolis, like many cities in the United States, was showing signs of deterioration by the mid-twentieth century as buildings and infrastructure aged. Families and businesses abandoned the urban core and moved to the suburbs, threatening the economic viability of downtown Minneapolis. In the mid-1950s, General Mills, an international giant in the food industry, announced plans to relocate its headquarters to a suburban campus, and there were rumors that the Pillsbury Company, another major local corporation, was planning to follow suit.

Civic and business leaders fought back, convincing Pillsbury to remain downtown. The city's planning department, energized by an influx of young planners with Ivy League pedigrees, embarked on a massive urban renewal campaign with strong support from the private sector, represented by a new organization, the Downtown Council.

There was soon a consensus that improving Nicollet Avenue, the spine of retail activity, was the key to maintaining the downtown's vitality. Nicollet was flanked by the financial corridor of Marquette Avenue to the east and the entertainment district of Hennepin Avenue to the west. In May 1957, an ad hoc group, the Nicollet Avenue Survey Committee, issued

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recommendations for improvements to the avenue. Soon thereafter, there was a proposal to enclose the street to create "Nicollet Plaza"—apparently the first time the concept of a pedestrian mall was broached.¹

It was not until December 1958, though, that the Downtown Council launched a more organized effort by recruiting business leaders and property owners to the new Nicollet Avenue Committee. Based on the committee's recommendation, the Downtown Council hired Barton, Aschman Associates, traffic engineers and planning consultants headquartered in Chicago, to evaluate current conditions on Nicollet Avenue and options for improving it. The consultants issued a report in June 1960 outlining five alternatives. The favored concept—converting Nicollet into a pedestrian and transit corridor—was refined by a second Barton Aschman study completed in December 1961. By August of the following year, the Downtown Council had engaged the San Francisco landscape architect firm Lawrence Halprin and Associates to develop plans for a pedestrian mall stretching eight blocks, from Washington Avenue to South Tenth Street. "The basic transitway idea provides for a 24-foot roadway to be used exclusively by transit and emergency vehicles," a contemporary source reported. "The roadway would curve slightly to provide greater workability in the treatment of open spaces. It would also de-emphasize the sight-lines along Nicollet and the feeling of distance would be minimized, encouraging more walking from block to block."²

The concept was radical for its time. An article dating from the early 1960s remarked: "Comparison with other downtown plans is difficult because this is the first transitway proposed any place in the country. We feel it is better than anything else provided to date and that more attention has been given to traffic circulation and overall engineering problems than anywhere else."³

The Miracle of the Mall

Nicollet Mall was part of a renaissance in Minneapolis that produced other mid-century icons such as the innovative Guthrie Theatre, the new Walker Art Center building, and the ever-optimistic Mary Tyler Moore. The city's increased vibrancy, particularly in comparison to the declining fortunes of many other American cities, transformed it into a Mecca for urban planners. Many made pilgrimages to the Nicollet Mall, where cars were banished and buses were contained on a sinuous path through a landscape designed to seduce pedestrians. The mall garnered international acclaim and was much copied—but rarely with equal success.

Even while it was under construction, the mall garnered widespread interest. On November 20, 1966, for example, the *New York Times* reported: "Cold weather made it doubtful last week that Minneapolis's new downtown Nicollet Mall will be open for buses and cabs in time for Christmas shopping." It noted, however, that "the mall will be open to pedestrians for the current season. Some walkways will be paved and others will be wooden with railings."⁴

It also attracted the attention of the First Lady. During a four-day trip to the Midwest in September 1967, Lady Bird Johnson attended a dedication ceremony for a fountain on the mall. That evening, she went to a performance at the Guthrie Theater. The mall was officially dedicated in November.⁵

The final cost for the mall was about \$3.5 million. Slightly over \$1 million of that was paid by grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation and federal beautification programs, while the remainder was covered by assessments from property owners in the vicinity.⁶

The Renaissance Continues

Nicollet Mall was an immediate success—so much so that crowds for events blocked shoppers from getting to the stores that had helped pay for the mall's construction. Property owners soon sought to remedy this ironic situation by drawing up

¹ "Fact Sheet—Nicollet Avenue Mall," sometime after 1962, 1, located in Peavey Plaza Folder, Minneapolis Collection, Minneapolis Central Library, Hennepin County Library (hereafter Minneapolis Collection).

² Ibid., 1–2; Abe Altowitz, "Mall Planner Promises Relief from Downtown Bustle," *Minneapolis Star*, February 13, 1964.

³ "Fact Sheet—Nicollet Avenue Mall," 3.

⁴ "Minneapolis: Work on Downtown Mall Falls Behind Schedule," *New York Times*, November 20, 1966.

⁵ "Mrs. Johnson Will Visit Seven States on Trip to Midwest This Week," *New York Times*, September 18, 1967.

⁶ Eric Pianin, "City Officials to Hold Discussion with Property Owners on Extension of Mall," *Minneapolis Star*, October 25, 1972.

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plans to extend the eight-block corridor another four blocks to the south, from Tenth Street to Grant Street. In August 1972, the Minneapolis Planning Commission amended the city's comprehensive plan to incorporate this expansion. The revised plan also included a pedestrian walkway that would connect the mall to Loring Park, one of the oldest parks in Minneapolis, through a proposed housing redevelopment area.⁷

An important component of the mall's expansion was the creation of a gathering space for popular public events. This space was to share a block with the new home for the Minnesota Orchestra. Established in 1903 as the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, the organization had performed in a string of venues over the years. Its first concert was across the Mississippi River from downtown in the massive International Auditorium, originally built as the Industrial Exposition Hall. The safety of that facility was soon questioned, though, after a tragic fire in the newly built Iroquois Theater in Chicago killed more than six hundred people in December. The remaining performances of the Minneapolis orchestra's season were held at Wesley Church on Grant Street, just east of Nicollet Avenue.⁸

The orchestra's first association with Nicollet and Eleventh Street came several years later, when the Northwestern National Life Insurance Company built a new headquarters on that corner that included a substantial auditorium fronting on Eleventh. The building's architect, Arthur Chamberlain, a principal in the prominent local firm Bertrand and Chamberlain, spent weeks traveling around the country studying well-known music halls and "the result is an auditorium such as Minneapolis has needed for years, and which, so far as can be seen in advance, meets every requirement."⁹

The Minneapolis Auditorium retained this function for a number of seasons. After a remodeling in 1924, it was renamed the Lyceum Theater. The orchestra decided to move out in 1930, though, after the rent for the space doubled. It found a new home at the University of Minnesota, where Northrop Auditorium offered a capacious 4,800 seats—if not the best acoustics. Later, to serve music lovers in the twin city to the east, the orchestra started a concert series at O'Shaughnessy Auditorium in Saint Paul.¹⁰

In the same year that the theater was remodeled, Northwestern National Life relocated to a new headquarters on Loring Park. With the loss of these prime tenants and the onset of the Great Depression, the property on Nicollet and Eleventh went into decline. A reporter in 1972 noted that "the Lyceum has served in a variety of non-musical roles, including its present use as a revival hall." Known as Soul's Harbor, the auditorium was owned by the Calvary Temple Evangelistic Association. The adjacent office property was held by private investors.¹¹

As part of the city's redevelopment efforts, both the orchestra and local boosters had been hoping that concerts could return downtown. By the early 1970s, the orchestra was seriously considering moving back to its old home at the Lyceum Theater—this time, for the first time, as the owner of its own facility. The adjacent office building would hold administrative offices, storage, and other uses. A newspaper article explained that "the major question on which the Lyceum project hinges is whether renovation can produce a hall with grade-A acoustics and enough seats to allow economic operation."¹²

The Lyceum failed the test. Undeterred, the Minnesota Orchestral Association announced plans in December 1972 to buy the theater building, demolish it, and erect a new hall. A press release explained that "the hall would be built in the general location of the Lyceum, Eleventh Street near the Nicollet Mall." It cautioned, though, that "construction of the new hall will only be feasible . . . as part of a joint development of the surrounding area with the City of Minneapolis. . . . The Association feels its commitment must be limited to construction of the auditorium, in conjunction with construction by the city of a parking facility and a park around the new hall. The Association has requested the city to undertake a feasibility study of the elements to be combined in the total project."¹³

⁷ Eric Pianin, "Extension of Mall is Approved," *Minneapolis Star*, August 18, 1972.

⁸ "Permits Are Withdrawn," *Minneapolis Tribune*, January 9, 1904; "Philharmonics without a Home," *Minneapolis Tribune*, January 14, 1904; "City in Brief," *Minneapolis Tribune*, January 21, 1904.

⁹ "General Design of Proposed Auditorium Has Been Completed," *Minneapolis Journal*, May 11, 1904.

¹⁰ Pamela Hill Nettleton, "Musical Values—A Community's Pride," in *Minnesota Orchestra at One Hundred: A Collection of Essays and Images* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Orchestral Association, 2002), 60–61; Michael Anthony, "Orchestra Buys Option on Soul's Harbor Building," *Minneapolis Tribune*, September 22, 1972.

¹¹ Peter Altman, "Orchestra May Buy Old Lyceum," *Minneapolis Star*, September 21, 1972.

¹² "Orchestra May Buy Old Lyceum;" "Orchestra Buys Option on Soul's Harbor Building."

¹³ Minnesota Orchestral Association, "Minnesota Orchestra to Construct New Concert Hall," news release, December 15, 1972, Minneapolis Collection.

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The association and city had reached an agreement on development responsibilities by February 1973. The date for the opening of the new orchestra hall was timed for the start of its concert season in October 1974, an extremely ambitious goal. The association indicated that "the construction consultants believe this can be done if the decision is made by next June 1 to proceed with the project, and excavation can begin immediately after that date." This was the drop-dead date for both the city and the association to have financial commitments in place to successfully complete the project.¹⁴

By April, the association's finance committee reported that "a number of details are yet to be worked out," and the anticipated start of construction had been pushed to July 1. The major components, though, were in place. The association, which owned or had options on the entire block, would clear the land and deed the half-block for the park back to the Minneapolis Park Board, an independent agency, in exchange for about \$1 million from the board. The association would build the hall on the remainder of the block, then sell the building, "plus the land it stands on, to the City at applicable cost, presently estimated at \$9,200,000, and immediately lease it back from the City for 30 years at a flat annual rental of \$598,473, the exact sum needed by the City to cover interest and amortization on general obligation bonds at 5% for 30 years." The association conceded that "this sale and lease-back arrangement is somewhat complicated but has a number of very real advantages and, after considering many other alternatives, appears to be the most desirable structure to establish."¹⁵

The financing plan was included in a package approved by the Minneapolis City Council and Mayor Charles Stenvig. The package also included funding for a \$4.9 million parking ramp that, fortuitously, the city had already been planning to build just across Marquette Avenue from the Orchestra Hall site. In addition, the package contained \$500,000 for development of the park.¹⁶

Despite this support, however, plans for the park were complicated because they required the cooperation of both the city and the Minneapolis Park Board, an independent agency. In early 1973, an Orchestral Association report noted that "discussions with representatives of the City and Park Board are continuing in an attempt to work out promptly the complex three-way collaboration proposed." That goal was never reached, and the city ultimately proceeded with the park's development on its own rather than jointly with the park board. While a pragmatic necessity, this decision was to have long-term ramifications because the city had little experience with operating and maintaining such a facility.¹⁷

In the meantime, planning for Orchestra Hall was moving quickly. New York architects Hardy Holtzman Pfeiffer were initially brought on board when the orchestra was examining the feasibility of rehabilitating the Lyceum Theater, and the company was kept on to develop plans for the new building. The architectural firm Hammel Green and Abrahamson was retained as the local affiliate. Dr. Cyril Harris, an acoustical consultant, had been a key member of the team from the start because of his work on famous performance venues around the world, including the new Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington. That facility's concert hall, which was renowned for the quality of its acoustics, became the model for the Minneapolis project.¹⁸

Local leaders played an important role in shaping the building's design, particularly Kenneth Dayton, head of the city's premiere department store. Dayton, "as an arbiter of taste for the Association and the community in matters of design," was "invited by the Association's Board" to craft "a design philosophy for the new concert hall to reflect the needs and aspirations it should satisfy for the Orchestra and the people it serves." One of his guidelines set the direction for the modern style that the architects adopted: "The building should be designed to serve the concert going audiences of the future rather than to reflect old world elegance. It should be an honest building, conveying a sense of dignity, simplicity, and eye satisfying proportion." He highlighted the significance of the building's site: "The location of the new hall makes it possible for the orchestra to relate to the community far better than has ever been possible in the past. The building and site should help express this ideal relationship of the orchestra to its community. . . . The downtown Minneapolis urban setting which is equally accessible to pedestrians, those using public transit, and the automobile drivers, and which fits

¹⁴ Minnesota Orchestral Association, "A New Concert Hall for the Minnesota Orchestra," 1973, 3-4, Minnesota Orchestral Association Archives, Performing Arts Archives, Manuscripts Division, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (hereafter MOA Archives).

¹⁵ Finance Committee, Minnesota Orchestral Association, "The Proposed Minnesota Orchestra Hall: A Distinctive Addition to Downtown Minneapolis," April 2, 1973, 5-6, Minneapolis Collection; Eric Pianin, "Who Pays for Downtown Hall?" *Minneapolis Star*, May 4, 1973.

¹⁶ Nick Coleman, "Downtown Music Hall Approved," *Minneapolis Tribune*, May 31, 1973.

¹⁷ "Downtown Music Hall Approved;" Minnesota Orchestral Association, "A New Concert Hall for the Minnesota Orchestra," 1973, 1-2, MOA Archives.

¹⁸ "A New Concert Hall for the Minnesota Orchestra," 2.

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perfectly into the plans for the extension of the Nicollet Mall and the connection to the Loring Park-Walker-Guthrie area, provides the opportunity for this site to become the focal point of the community.”¹⁹

A Slow Start for Peavey

When the Orchestral Association opened the new hall in 1974, the city was finally getting underway with construction of the outside event space, which had lagged due to a shortfall in funding. The \$2.5 million budget was finally met with a \$600,000 donation from the Peavey Company, a local grain merchant, which gained naming rights for its generosity. The donation commemorated the company’s centennial. Behind-the-scenes planning for the gift had been going on for months. In July 1973, a confidential memorandum was circulated to key business leaders and city staff discussing a date for announcing the donation. One of the main reasons to delay the announcement until the end of August was to allow time for the city to select a landscape architect that could prepare drawings to “produce a dramatic story and an effective public relations result for all concerned.”²⁰

The city was leaning towards hiring the office of an innovative, young New Yorker, M. Paul Friedberg, “a nationally noted landscape architect and city planning expert.” The city had already retained Friedberg “to prepare a study on the development of the Loring Park area and the future Mall extension.” In July, the city council was scheduled to consider Friedberg’s preliminary report on the Loring project. “Tommy [Thompson, the city coordinator,] and his associates have considered commissioning him to design the Mall extension, including the Peavey park-plaza area, but they want his complete study report in hand before proposing him for the job.”²¹

The Loring Park redevelopment area at the south end of the downtown commercial district was targeted to be a massive urban renewal project. The city needed a master plan for the project and had tasked Friedberg with reconfiguring fourteen underutilized city blocks, many occupied by surface parking lots, into large parcels that would attract developers of medium- to high-density housing. The area was to incorporate a pedestrian way that would link Nicollet Mall to Loring Park and other amenities to the south, including the Walker Art Center and the Guthrie Theater. Friedberg was also retained to design this space, which became known as the Loring Greenway. He adapted elements that were coming to characterize his designs—brick ziggurats, fountains and canals, trellised seating areas, custom light fixtures, and an adventure playground—to create an intimate corridor that was an urbane counterpoint to the surrounding urban bustle.

Thompson must have liked what Friedberg produced for the Loring project. In December, the city officially selected Friedberg’s firm to design Peavey Plaza.²²

The news of the Peavey Company’s donation had finally been unveiled in October by Peavey’s president, Fritz Corrigan. According to a contemporary account: “The gift of the park to the citizens of the community for completion during Peavey’s centennial year, fits in perfectly with the company’s already expressed commitment to be an active part of downtown Minneapolis.” Corrigan added that “Peavey had been looking for some significant way to observe its centennial and the coincidence of other urban environmental plans at this time led naturally to this opportunity. They are: First, the intention of the city to extend Nicollet Mall southward to grant Street; Second, the city’s plan to connect Loring Park with the Mall near 12th Street by means of a diagonal Loring greenway; third, the Minnesota Orchestra’s dramatic new concert hall now being built in the 11th to 12th street block on the west side of Marquette.” He added that “Peavey park-plaza will join these three elements, and should become a well-used focus for downtown livability.”²³

Friedberg and the Park Plaza

Friedberg was an excellent choice for designing this new lynchpin for a new era in downtown Minneapolis. He was quickly gaining a reputation for an innovative approach to urban design, the park plaza. Featuring urban materials, such as

¹⁹ Ibid., 2–3.

²⁰ Memo from Donald L. Engle to Stephen Pflaum, Judson Bemis, Ron Kennedy, Thomas A. Thompson, Bower Hawthorne, Ray Mithun, David J. Speer, Kenneth N. Dayton, and John S. Pillsbury, Jr., July 12, 1973, MOA Archives.

²¹ Ibid.

²² City of Minneapolis, “City’s Peavey Plaza to be Dedicated Tuesday,” news release, no date, Minneapolis Collection.

²³ “City’s Peavey Plaza to be Dedicated Tuesday,” Peavey Company, news release, October 18, 1973, MOA Archives; “Backgrounder on the Concept of the New Peavey Park-Plaza,” October 18, 1973, MOA Archives.

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concrete and metal, and rectilinear rather than curvilinear forms, the park plaza was a modern counterpoint to the picturesque greenery that had characterized parks until that time.

Friedberg's future would not have been easy to prophesy in his childhood. He later admitted: "Unlike many designers, who have a prenatal premonition or who know shortly after birth that their destiny is linked to the T-square and triangle, I've never felt a spiritual calling to design or specifically landscape architecture." Born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1931, he soon moved with his family "to the heart-land of America, the Pennsylvania Dutch country. It was [an] idyllic place to spend the depression and for five glorious years I followed in the footsteps of Tom Sawyer, a one room school house with 35 students, pot belly stove and all. My teacher could be late starting school if the hunting was good. In the winter, when conditions were right, the milk man would take my sister and I to school in his horse drawn sled."²⁴

By the time he was in junior high school, his family had moved again, to Middletown, New York, about one hundred miles northwest of New York City. Here, he explained, "my first remote contact with my current career came when my father became a weekend landscape contractor. He obtained a small stone filled parcel of land that I was destined to convert into a nursery. The caliber of my work must have impressed my father into believing that this was my calling, and in my senior year I was informed that I would attend college to major in ornamental horticulture."²⁵

The young Friedberg enrolled in the School of Agriculture at Cornell University and did well, although "my major seemed to be coffee hour, and it consumed my interests leaving little time for structured learning." He did, however, take a broad range of classes, and was particularly influenced by a course in sculpture. Expecting to encounter a traditional approach to that art form, he was surprised when he was assigned "to suggest an abstract idea with a rectangle of plasatyle and a palette knife." The fact "that complex thoughts could be expressed in forms and volumes without words became a compelling revelation."²⁶

After graduating from Cornell in 1954 and spending two years in the U.S. Army, he moved to New York City, only to discover that it "wasn't fertile grounds for an aspiring young ornamental horticulturist." While seeking work in the office of a landscape architect, the nearest thing to work in his field that he could find, he developed a fascination with blueprints and, inadvertently, stumbled into his life's calling. He eventually landed a job with a landscape architect in Hartford, Connecticut. A quick learner, he had gained enough experience in that office in four months to return to New York and find employment with a landscape architect in the city.²⁷

The timing of his arrival in the field of landscape architecture did not seem propitious. After getting on its feet as a profession in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) was established in 1899—landscape architecture was in the doldrums after World War II. The picturesque landscapes extolled in the nineteenth century used a different vocabulary than the stripped-down design aesthetic of the mid-twentieth century. The glory days of grand estates had ended with the war, and even before that, the Great Depression had sapped the ability of a broader clientele to purchase the services of landscape architects. As private developers raced to meet the pent-up demand for housing that exploded after the war, they created a suburban landscape that was generally mass-produced and uninspired.

By the late 1950s, though, the tide was beginning to turn. Friedberg sensed an opportunity, opening his own office in 1958. He was only twenty-eight years old. He later reflected: "Timing couldn't be better, we were now at the door step of the 60's. Old values were discarded everything became possible. This was a time of liberation and exploration. Landscape architecture was of age. The proponents of the environmental movement, the fundamentalists, took part of the profession in the direction of resource management. Other[s] like myself concentrated in the cities, finding the urban environment with the issues of social responsibility and relevance a fertile arena. The cities were intensely interactive arenas of socialization."²⁸

His unorthodox introduction into the profession turned out to be an asset. "My empirical education was appropriate for these times. In my life, I had cut across various social spectrums, from the one room school house to the heart of

²⁴ M. Paul Friedberg, "Looking Back," in *Process: Architecture* 82 (1989): 8–9.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 10–11. See also "Biography of M. Paul Friedberg" on pages 6–7 of the same publication.

²⁸ Friedberg, "Looking Back," 11–12.

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Manhattan. Most of my information and values were acquired through the process of discovery without the incoherence or orthodoxy or preconception. I carried little formal baggage. I didn't relinquish ideas or attitudes in order to gain new ones. Everything was the art of the possible. Intuition and logic was my guide."²⁹

Friedberg used his unorthodox views to challenge traditional design approaches to everything from children's playgrounds to corporate campuses. An area where he made a significant mark was the "park plaza," which he described as "a combination of the old courthouse square, and the European market place. Only this was a market place of cultural and recreational ideas."³⁰

It was Jacob Riis Plaza in New York that gained Friedberg international prominence when it opened in 1965. The city's public housing authority, which had relied on strict guidelines for the construction of its buildings and the associated landscapes, was beginning to recognize the deficiencies of that approach. Friedberg was the right person at the right time. He received the commission for an experiment in urban design that was supported by an innovative private funder, the Vincent Astor Foundation. Surrounded by public housing towers, the two-block-long rectangular site was separated into distinct "rooms" by Friedberg's plans.

"For Friedberg everything came together with the Riis Houses," according to journalist and urban critic William H. Whyte. "This was a housing project with spaces so dull any re-do would be notable." Friedberg created a masterpiece, with the country's first "adventure playground" at its heart. It also featured an amphitheater and water features, other elements that became major motifs of Friedberg's work. Whyte concluded that "Riis was a revelation," becoming a required tour for cutting-edge landscape architects and urban planners. In addition to serving as a model for the design of community areas in public housing, "it became evident that many of the features of Riis Houses were indeed applicable to other kinds of spaces and other constituencies."³¹

Creating Peavey Plaza

These "other kinds of spaces" and "other constituencies" included urban plazas for the general public. One of his pioneering works in this new format was Peavey Plaza. Friedberg later wrote: "The city Minneapolis has proven itself to be one of the most progressive urban centers of the mid-west. After completing an interior atrium, skywalks and a vibrant mall, the need was felt for a major urban open space for large scale activities that were in conflict with the mall. The notion of a large paved open space was not appealing and the city suggested we seek an alternative. We proposed a solution which has come to be called the 'park plaza.' Truly an American form, a mixture of the American green square and the European hard space."³²

In forming his plans for Peavey Plaza, Friedberg called on the design vocabulary that he had used so masterfully at Riis Plaza: an angular composition; a ground plan dominated by carefully detailed concrete, brick, and tile; a recessed area approached by stepped terraces, creating an informal amphitheater; fountains, pools, and falling water, which introduced an auditory element to the space; a variety of "rooms" that could accommodate a range of uses by individuals and groups; built-in benches forming small seating areas; a lacy canopy of trees. Unlike Riis, though, Peavey was on a relatively small scale—half a block rather than two full blocks—and in a commercial setting. Use by children was not a major consideration, so the elaborate play areas at Riis were absent from Peavey. Instead, as the forecourt to the new Orchestra Hall, Peavey was a more elegant manifestation of Friedberg's design philosophy. Riis's angularity was softened at Peavey by vegetation—"to make the plaza more compatible to the American taste," Friedberg later explained.³³

Friedberg's final plans for Peavey Plaza were approved by the city in May 1974, and a formal groundbreaking was held on August 1. By the time that Friedberg had received the commission for the project, the site had been excavated almost a story below grade for the construction of Orchestra Hall, and a band of windows in the lower level of the hall looked into the depression. While the city told Friedberg that the grade could be returned to street level if that best suited his plans,

²⁹ Ibid., 12.

³⁰ Ibid., 13.

³¹ William H. Whyte, "Paul Friedberg's Landscape Design," in *Process: Architecture* 82 (1989): 16–18.

³² "Peavy [sic] Plaza," *Process: Architecture* 82 (1989): 44; Peavey Plaza, news release, July 30, 1974, Minneapolis Collection.

³³ "Peavy [sic] Plaza," 44.

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he decided to work with the depth. The lower level held the centerpiece of his design, a 140-foot by 200-foot pool that could be drained when more space was needed for an event. In the winter, the pool could be transformed into a skating rink.³⁴

The plaza was completed by June 1975 at a cost of approximately \$3 million. In its coverage of the plaza's dedication, the *Minneapolis Tribune* editorialized: "Peavey Plaza is described variously as a link between downtown and Loring Park, a charming complement to Orchestra Hall, a new attraction for visitors and an oasis amid the big-city bustle. It is all of those, and more. The plaza . . . is a graceful and pleasant place for relaxation, entertainment and community events. Its size . . . and design enable it to accommodate both those who are there for activities and those there for inactivity."³⁵

When Peavey Plaza opened, its northeast corner near Orchestra Hall—which was part of the Orchestral Association's property—remained unfinished. Plans called for the Orchestral Association and the city to develop a restaurant in that location that would connect the plaza's street and lower levels. A number of factors, especially objections from restaurateurs in the vicinity, forced the abandonment of that plan in 1977. It was not until 1979 that the Orchestral Association hired Friedberg to draft plans to extend the plaza to that area. The construction was completed in 1980.

In the meantime, Friedberg had gained another commission in Minneapolis. A major corporation, Honeywell, challenged Friedberg to transform a four-acre surface parking lot, which was wedged between the company's south Minneapolis headquarters and a depressed freeway, into a landscape amenity. The two-block-long site was outfitted with expanses of grass lawn, in part to highlight large-scale sculptures, but also featured water features, stepped terraces, an amphitheater, informal seating areas, and other hallmarks of Friedberg's work.³⁶

On a national scale, Friedberg increasingly drew high-profile commissions including Pershing Park, one of his best-known works. Situated on Pennsylvania Avenue only two blocks from the White House, Pershing clearly reflects the lessons that Friedberg learned at Peavey Plaza. A sunken pool at the heart of Pershing Plaza is surrounded by terraces, some of which step directly into the pool. Although lacking fountains, the plaza has a waterfall that cascades into the pool, reminiscent of the waterfalls at Peavey. Berms edging the perimeter muffle the noise of traffic from the streets that surround Pershing Park. Honeylocusts provide dappled shade. William Whyte's description of Pershing Park underscores its similarities to Peavey Plaza: "People like this place. As with other notable small spaces it appeals to people who come in groups and enjoy activity as well as people who just want to sit or read or snooze."³⁷

Downtown's Living Room

Within a few years of Peavey's completion, the plaza began cohosting an annual event that epitomized its key role in downtown's renaissance. The event, Sommerfest, was debuted by the Minnesota Orchestra in July 1980. For decades, the orchestra had experimented with summer programs, but none had been successful in drawing large crowds during the notoriously difficult season for traditional cultural programs. While outdoor venues such as Tanglewood in Massachusetts and Ravinia outside of Chicago had become established as summer concert destinations, "The idea of an American symphony orchestra doing a summer season of such musical substance, and inside the Hall rather than outdoors in a park or other venue, was virtually unheard of," according to pianist Jeffrey Siegel. The Orchestral Association, however, made ambitious plans, using Peavey Plaza as the outdoor draw and programming an intense schedule of concerts morning, noon, and night. The symphony members "who only a few years earlier . . . had dreaded the summer unemployment line . . . found themselves remembering the old adage 'Be careful what you wish for.'"³⁸

The plan worked. As one writer put it, "For three weeks in July (and later, four) the Hall and Peavey Plaza were simply the place to be. The Plaza was renamed the Marktplatz, and quickly nicknamed the Platz. It swarmed with people buying brats and beer at the vendor stands while others took a break from the sun by ducking under the red-and-white table umbrellas for an ice-cream cone. An endless stream of ensembles kept oom-pah, barbershop, mariachi, jazz, klezmer,

³⁴ "City's Peavey Plaza to be Dedicated Tuesday."

³⁵ "Peavey Plaza and the Loring Area," *Minneapolis Tribune*, June 12, 1975.

³⁶ "Honeywell Corporate Headquarters," *Process: Architecture* 82 (1989): 70.

³⁷ "Paul Friedberg's Landscape Design," 19.

³⁸ Siegel quote in Brian Newhouse, "Sounds of Summer," in *Minnesota Orchestra at One Hundred* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Orchestral Association, 2002), 137; see also pages 131–145.

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you name it, wafting over the best people-watching spot in the entire city." The scene "of families enjoying music on the Plaza has been repeated over and over through the years."³⁹

The plaza also accommodated blues festivals, jazz concerts, and a variety of other events. In the 1980s, Friedberg was delighted that Peavey Plaza "has become the focus for community artistic activities, informal art events, as well as program sculpture shows. The visitor may encounter the work of environmental artists who have sought to interpret the space for limited periods of time." It also became a haven for downtown workers seeking a pleasant spot for a picnic lunch. The gentle burbling of the metal fountains and the lower poolside elevation muffled the noise of city streets. Looking back on his creation, Friedberg wrote: "It is encouraging to see how the community has taken to the space and made it their own."⁴⁰

Peavey in Peril

By the early twenty-first century, the popular plaza was showing signs of age. An article in *Landscape Architecture* magazine in September 2004 was titled "Death of a Thousand Patches: Shoddy Maintenance Whittles Away at a Minneapolis Gem." The local landscape architecture community rallied and documented Peavey Plaza for the Historic American Landscapes Survey. The group also attempted to nominate the plaza for local historic designation by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, but that effort was abandoned after it became clear that powerful factions within the city government would oppose the designation.

The significance of Peavey Plaza was subsequently affirmed as a result of Section 106 compliance related to the proposed construction of a light-rail line on Nicollet Mall. During the Section 106 process, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, as a representative of the Federal Transit Administration, and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office determined that the plaza was eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.⁴¹

In the meantime, Orchestra Hall, like Peavey Plaza, was in need of rehabilitation. The orchestra performed its last concert at the hall in spring 2012 before moving to a temporary venue so that a major renovation could begin. As funds were being raised for work on the hall, pressure grew to update the plaza. This led the city to interview four landscape architect teams for the project, a process that concluded with the selection of the Minneapolis firm Oslund and Associates. The city asserted that the plaza's rehabilitation would respect the original design, a promise that seemed assured by the inclusion on the design team of M. Paul Friedberg, the plaza's original designer, and Charles Birnbaum, a national authority on historic landscapes.

During the design process, however, Friedberg and Birnbaum were elbowed out. In the same period, the city subverted a community engagement process by an excess of control and a lack of transparency. The single "alternative" for Peavey that was made public virtually ignored the historic design, and was equally disappointing as a new design.

The city was undeterred by criticism of the plans. Armed with \$2 million in state bonding funds for the project, which was estimated to cost several times that amount, the city applied to the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) for a permit to demolish Peavey Plaza. While acknowledging that the plaza was a historic resource, the city claimed that the cost of rehabilitating it was too great—partly because of the deterioration that had been caused by the city's own neglect. The public hearing was well attended, mostly by advocates for Peavey Plaza, including Charles Birnbaum. Paul Friedberg contributed by preparing an alternative plan that would rehabilitate the plaza, respecting its original design while adapting to changing needs in the twenty-first century.

The HPC denied the demolition application and called on the city to initiate a study to designate the plaza as a local landmark. The city appealed that decision to itself and, not surprisingly, the city council overturned the HPC's denial of the demolition permit and ignored the provision for the designation study. At this point, legal action was needed to stop the city from proceeding with the demolition of Peavey Plaza. Preservation Alliance of Minnesota and The Cultural Landscape Foundation have filed a lawsuit under the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act to protect this important historic resource.

³⁹ "Sounds of Summer," in *Minnesota Orchestra at One Hundred*, 131–145.

⁴⁰ "Peavy [sic] Plaza," 44.

⁴¹ The Nicollet Mall was on the route of one alternative for the Southwest Transitway light-rail line; another alternative was selected.

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The Significance of Peavey Plaza

In needing some rehabilitation after decades of hard use, Peavey Plaza was not unique. By the late 1990s, even the champions of Jacob Riis Plaza conceded that it “no longer maintains the elegance and appeal that [it] once had.” For Riis, this led to the annihilation of the original design in 2000. This loss underscores the importance of Peavey Plaza, a seminal work of a landscape architect who had a profound influence on the profession in the last half of the twentieth century.⁴²

The significance of the Minneapolis plaza, though, has been recognized independent of Riis since at least 1978, when Peavey won the ASLA’s Professional Design Competition only a few years after it opened. In announcing the award, *Landscape Architecture* magazine noted that “this Plaza represents the new urban plaza park form.” Friedberg was made a Fellow of the ASLA in the following year. Friedberg’s place in the international cadre of leading Modernist landscape architects was further established by a 1989 issue of the Japanese design journal *Process: Architecture*, which was devoted to his work. Peavey Plaza was one of twenty of his projects that were profiled. In considering this collection, Friedberg remarked: “I’m relieved to see how well some of the work holds up after a few decades.” Ten years later, in 1999, the Minnesota chapter of the ASLA selected Peavey Plaza as one of six Minnesota parks to be recognized by the “100 Parks, 100 Years” program commemorating the ASLA’s centennial. The medallion installed on the site identifies the plaza “as a national landmark for outstanding landscape architecture.”⁴³

More recently, Peavey’s national significance was highlighted by its selection as the cover photograph for *Shaping the American Landscape: New Profiles from the Pioneers of American Landscape Design Project*. Published by the University of Virginia Press in 2009, the book followed *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, a seminal compilation of biographical information about the country’s prominent landscape designers. *Shaping the American Landscape* broke new ground by including pioneers of modern design, such as Friedberg. There is also an entry on Peavey Plaza in *Valued Places: Landscape Architecture in Minnesota*, a publication of the Minnesota chapter of the ASLA. Because of its highly visible location on Nicollet Mall adjacent to Orchestra Hall, Peavey Plaza has introduced Modernist landscape design to thousands of people. For Minneapolis, which is known for its nationally significant park system, Peavey Plaza marked a major turning point from the picturesque tradition that had inspired virtually all of the city’s parks created in the previous century.⁴⁴

Based on the scholarly analysis of the post-war period of landscape architecture, the national significance of Peavey Plaza in this context is well established. The same is true for its local significance in planning and development. The planning process in downtown Minneapolis has received scholarly evaluation in Alan A. Altshuler’s *The City Planning Process*, Amy Sutherland’s thesis “Loring Park: A Redevelopment Experience,” and other works.

The plaza’s fountains are instantly recognizable as icons of the city. For those who know the plaza’s history, they also symbolize the city’s thoughtful, energetic—and very successful—efforts to fight the suburban exodus after World War II and maintain the vitality that continues to characterize Minneapolis today.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

⁴² “Riis Park Plaza,” *Process: Architecture* 82 (1989): 26.

⁴³ “Peavey Plaza,” *Landscape Architecture* 68 (July 1978): 332–333; “Looking Back,” 8.

⁴⁴ Charles Birnbaum and Stephanie Foell, eds., *Shaping the American Landscape: New Profiles from the Pioneers of American Landscape Design Project* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009); “Fact Sheet—Nicollet Avenue Mall,” 1; Charles Birnbaum and Robin Karson, eds., *Pioneers of American Landscape Design* (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishers, 2000).

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Minnesota Orchestral Association Archives, Performing Arts Archives, Manuscripts Division, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

Peavey Plaza Folder, Minneapolis Collection, Minneapolis Central Library, Hennepin County Library.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other

Name of repository: **Minneapolis Collection, HCLIB**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

HE-MPC-3620

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 478270 4979911
Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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4
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Registered Land Survey No. 1750, Tract A

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries represent the original boundary of Peavey Plaza and the original extant of the design.

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11. Form Prepared By

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state MN

zip code 55401

e-mail roise@hessroise.com; gales@hessroise.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking south from the corner of Nicollet Mall and South Eleventh Street. The flagpoles are in the right foreground.

1 of 14

MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0001

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking south-southeast from Nicollet Mall.

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Peavey Plaza

Name of Property

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0002

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Charlene Roise

Date Photographed: July 15, 2004

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking south from a terrace parallel to Nicollet Mall. Examples of new retaining walls and plantings added to the plaza.

3 of 14

MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0003

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking northeast from the corner of Nicollet Mall and South Twelfth Street. The stainless-steel and concrete fountain, as well as original concrete bollards, are in the center.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0004

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking north-northwest from South Twelfth Street. View of terraces with historic plantings, circular planters, and concrete bollards. The large fountain is in the left background.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0005

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking northwest from South Twelfth Street. View of new retaining block walls in the foreground. Historic terraces, accessible ramp, benches, and plantings are in the background.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0006

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking northwest from the pool level. View of the historic steps and terraces leading up to Nicollet Mall from the dry pool. The smaller stainless-steel and concrete fountain is in the left background. Historic concrete bollards run along the edge of the pool. Property owned by the Minnesota Orchestra Association is in the right background.

Peavey Plaza

Name of Property

Hennepin County, Minnesota

County and State

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0007

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking north from the pool level. View of the historic steps leading up to Nicollet Mall from the dry pool. The bosque of Honeylocust trees is in the background. Property owned by the Minnesota Orchestra Association is in the right background.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0008

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Charlene Roise

Date Photographed: July 15, 2004

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking west from the pool level. View of the historic terraces and steps leading up to Nicollet mall from the filled pool. Non-historic retaining walls are interspersed amongst terraces and original benches. The YWCA is in the background.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0009

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking southwest from the pool level. View of the historic dry pool in the foreground. The historic stainless-steel and concrete fountain is in the center background. Westminster Presbyterian Church is in the left background.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0010

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking southwest from the pool level. Closer view of the multiple levels of the large fountain. The stainless-steel pipes are in the center background and the YWCA is visible in the right background.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0011

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Peavey Plaza

Name of Property

Hennepin County, Minnesota

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Photographer: Penny Petersen

Date Photographed: August 9, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking southeast from the pool level. View of the historic terraces, staircases, and accessible ramp leading up to South Twelfth Street. The benches, circular planters, bollards, and plantings are all historic. Orchestra Hall is in the background.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0012

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Charlene Roise

Date Photographed: July 15, 2004

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking southeast from a terrace level. View of the original sloped landscape beds with original plantings. Westminster Presbyterian Church is in the background.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0013

Name of Property: Peavey Plaza

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

State: Minnesota

Photographer: Charlene Roise

Date Photographed: July 15, 2004

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Peavey Plaza looking southeast. View of the historic planters and concrete surfaces.

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MN_Hennepin County_Peavey Plaza_0014

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Finance Department

street & number 350 South Firth Street, Suite 325M

telephone 612-673-2079

city or town Minneapolis

state MN

zip code 55415

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Peavey Plaza

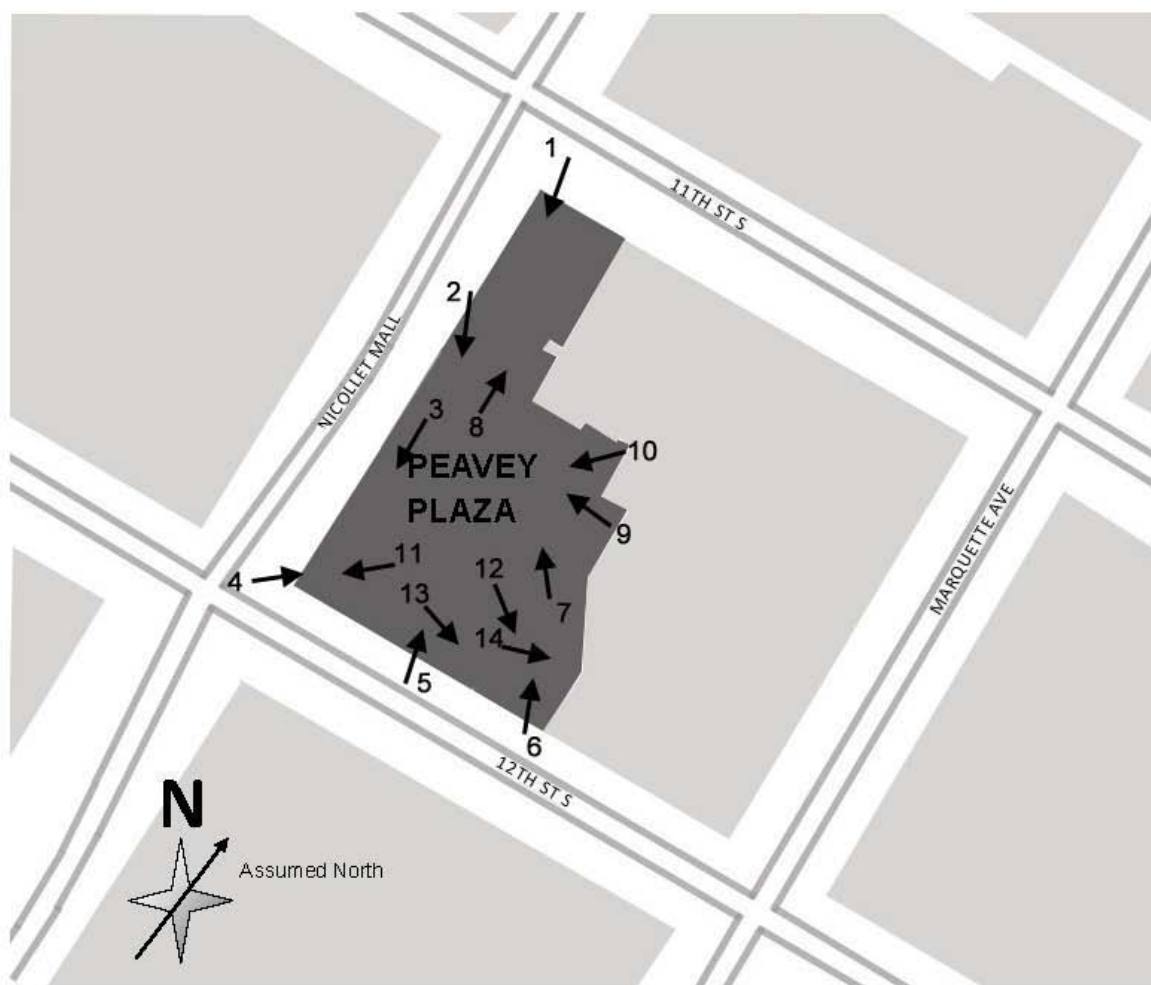
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PEAVEY PLAZA
1101 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis
Hennepin County
Minnesota

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Figure 1. Site plan showing the location of Peavey Plaza in relation to downtown Minneapolis, from *Process: Architecture 82* (May 1989): Peavey Plaza.

Figure 2. Photograph of Peavey Plaza, from *Process: Architecture 82* (May 1989): Peavey Plaza.

Figure 3. Photograph of the fountain in Peavey Plaza, from *Process: Architecture 82* (May 1989): Peavey Plaza.

Figure 4. Photograph of the terraces along Nicollet Mall, from *Process: Architecture 82* (May 1989): Peavey Plaza.

Figure 5. Looking north across Peavey Plaza. Visible in the background is the undeveloped land next to Orchestra Hall. Photographer unknown, c. 1975, Hennepin County Library, Minneapolis Collection, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Figure 6. Looking east towards the property owned by the Minnesota Orchestra from the corner of Nicollet Mall and Eleventh Street. Photographer unknown, c. 1975, Hennepin County Library, Minneapolis Collection, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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Peavey Plaza

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Figure 1.

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Figure 2.

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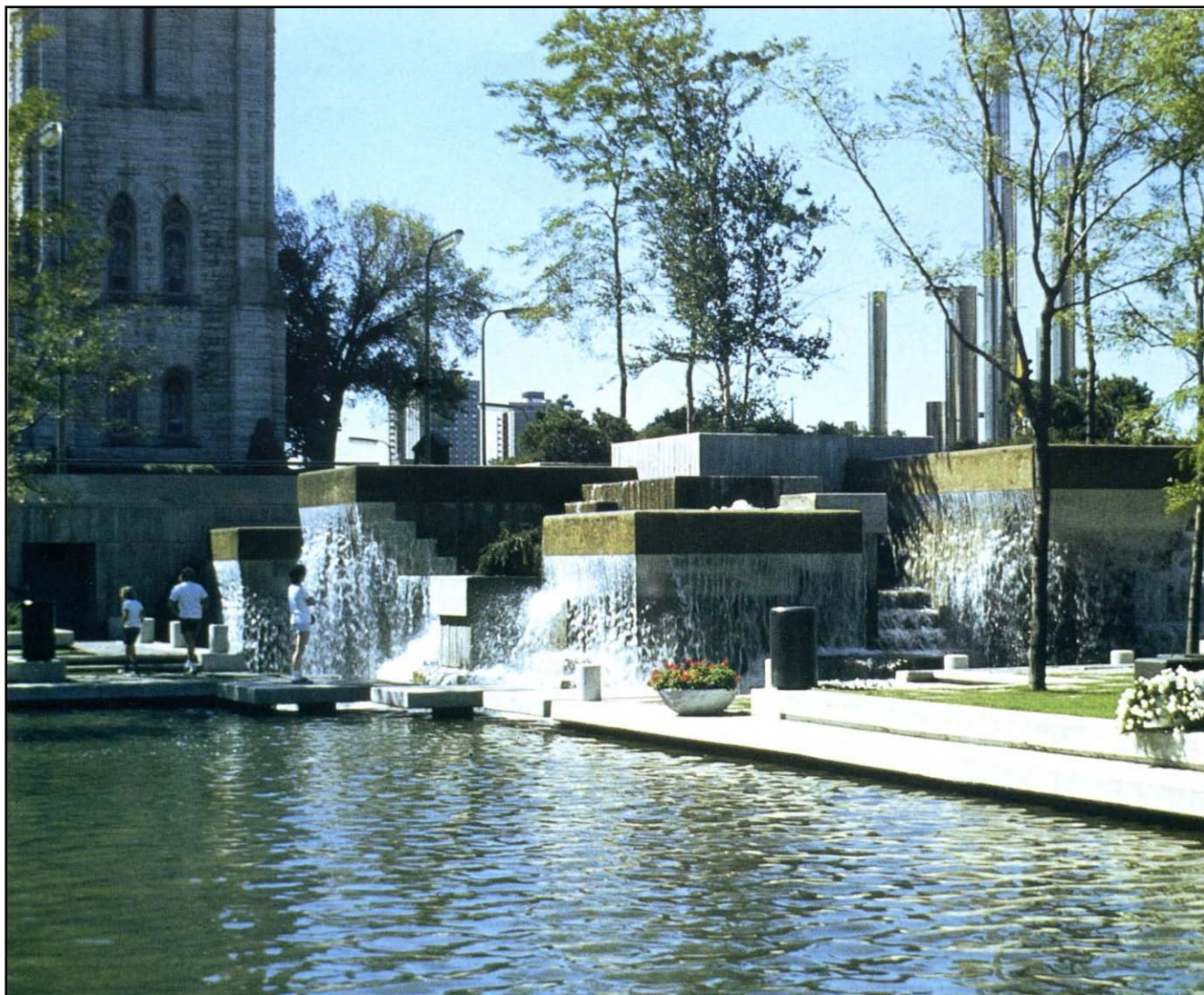


Figure 3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Peavey Plaza

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Figure 4.

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Figure 5.

United States Department of the Interior
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Figure 6.

